

Preventing Pollution: It's Up to Us

In the Santa Clara Valley, storm drains transport water directly to local creeks and San Francisco Bay without treatment. Stormwater pollution is a serious problem for wildlife dependent on our waterways and for the people who live near polluted streams or baylands. Some common sources of this pollution include spilled oil, fuel, and fluids from vehicles and heavy equipment; construction debris; sediment created by erosion; landscaping runoff containing pesticides or weed killers; and materials such as used motor oil, antifreeze, and paint products that people pour or spill into a street or storm drain.

Thirteen valley municipalities have joined together with Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to educate local residents and businesses and fight stormwater pollution. Join us, by following the practices described in this pamphlet.

Doing the Job Right

General Principles

- ☐ Keep an orderly site and ensure good housekeeping practices are used.
- ☐ Maintain equipment properly.
- ☐ Cover materials when they are not in use.
- ☐ Keep materials away from streets, storm drains and drainage channels.
- ☐ Ensure dust control water doesn't leave site or discharge to storm drains.

Advance Planning To Prevent Pollution

- ☐ Schedule excavation and grading activities for dry weather periods. To reduce soil erosion, plant temporary vegetation or place other erosion controls before rain begins. Use the *Erosion and Sediment Control Manual*, available from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, as a reference.
- ☐ Control the amount of runoff crossing your site (especially during excavation!) by using berms or temporary or permanent drainage ditches to divert water flow around the site. Reduce

Storm Drain Pollution from Construction Activities

Construction sites are common sources of storm water pollution. Materials and wastes that blow or wash into a storm drain, gutter, or street have a direct impact on local creeks and the Bay.

As a contractor, or site supervisor, owner or operator of a site, you may be responsible for any environmental damage caused by your subcontractors or employees.

stormwater runoff velocities by constructing temporary check dams or berms where appropriate.

- ☐ Train your employees and subcontractors. Make these brochures available to everyone who works on the construction site. Inform subcontractors about the stormwater requirements and their own responsibilities. Use *Blueprint for a Clean Bay*, a construction best management practices guide available from the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program, as a reference.

Good Housekeeping Practices

- ☐ Designate one area of the site for auto parking, vehicle refueling, and routine equipment maintenance. The designated area should be well away from streams or storm drain inlets, bermed if necessary. Make major repairs off site.
- ☐ Keep materials out of the rain – prevent runoff contamination at the source. Cover exposed piles of soil or construction materials with plastic sheeting or temporary roofs. Before it rains, sweep and remove materials from surfaces that drain to storm drains, creeks, or channels.
- ☐ Keep pollutants off exposed surfaces. Place trash cans and recycling receptacles around the site to minimize litter.

- ☐ Clean up leaks, drips and other spills immediately so they do not contaminate soil or groundwater or leave residue on paved surfaces. Use dry cleanup methods whenever possible. If you must use water, use just enough to keep the dust down.
- ☐ Cover and maintain dumpsters. Check frequently for leaks. Place dumpsters under roofs or cover with tarps or plastic sheeting secured around the outside of the dumpster. Never clean out a dumpster by hosing it down on the construction site.
- ☐ Place portable toilets away from storm drains. Make sure portable toilets are in good working order. Check frequently for leaks.

Materials/Waste Handling

- ☐ Practice Source Reduction -- minimize waste when you order materials. Order only the amount you need to finish the job.
- ☐ Use recyclable materials whenever possible. Arrange for pick-up of recyclable materials such as concrete, asphalt, scrap metal, solvents, degreasers, cleared vegetation, paper, rock, and vehicle maintenance materials such as used oil, antifreeze, batteries, and tires.
- ☐ Dispose of all wastes properly. Many construction materials and wastes, including solvents, water-based paints, vehicle fluids, broken asphalt and concrete, wood, and cleared vegetation can be recycled. (See the reference list of recyclers in *Blueprint for a Clean Bay*.) Materials that cannot be recycled must be taken to an appropriate landfill or disposed of as hazardous waste. Never bury waste materials or leave them in the street or near a creek or stream bed.

Permits

- ☐ In addition to local grading and building permits, you will need to obtain coverage under the State's General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit if your construction site's disturbed area totals 5 acres or more. Information on the General Permit can be obtained from the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

Businesses that generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use Santa Clara County's Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program. Call (408) 299-7300 for a quote, more information or guidance on disposal.

Palo Alto operates a similar program, with monthly collection, for small businesses. Call the City of Palo Alto, (650) 496-6980, or Greenfield Services Corporation, 1-800-433-5060 for information or to schedule an appointment.

This brochure is one in a series of pamphlets describing storm drain pollution prevention measures for specific types of construction industry activities. Other pamphlets include:

General Construction and Site Supervision

Landscaping, Gardening, and Pool Maintenance

Painting and Application of Solvents and Adhesives

Roadwork and Paving

Earth-Moving Activities and Dewatering Activities

Heavy Equipment Operation

Home Repair and Remodeling

For additional brochures, call **1-800-794-2482**



Spill Response Agencies:

1. In the City of Santa Clara, call (408) 984-3080.
2. In the City of Palo Alto, call (650) 329-2413.
3. In the City of San Jose, dial 9-1-1 if hazardous materials enter the storm drain system. For non-hazardous spills, call (408) 945-3000.
4. In other cities, **DIAL 9-1-1**
5. State Office of Emergency Services Warning Center (24 hours). **1-800-852-7550**
6. Santa Clara County Environmental Health Services. (408) 299-6930

Local Pollution Control Agencies

County of Santa Clara
Pollution Prevention Program. . (408) 441-1195

County of Santa Clara Integrated Waste
Management Program. (408) 441-1198

County of Santa Clara District Attorney
Environmental Crimes Hotline. . (408) 299-TIPS

Santa Clara County
Recycling Hotline. 1-800-533-8414

Santa Clara Valley Water
District. (408) 265-2600

Santa Clara Valley Water
District Pollution Hotline 1-888-510-5151

San Jose/Santa Clara Water
Pollution Control Plant. (408) 945-3000

*Serving Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos,
Milpitas, Monte Sereno, San Jose, Santa
Clara, Saratoga*

Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant
Serving Sunnyvale. (408) 730-7270

Regional Water Quality
Control Plant. (650) 329-2598
*Serving East Palo Alto Sanitary District, Los
Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto,
Stanford*

Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Francisco Bay Region. (510) 622-2300

General Construction and Site Supervision

Best Management Practices for Construction



Who should use this brochure?

- General contractors
- Site supervisors
- Inspectors
- Home builders
- Developers